



MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

FY 2004 Annual Report



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DEDICATION



Her Light Still Shines...

"I believe in the power of government to make a better place for us to live. I believe that many problems in the public realm can be solved by the focused attention and hard work of capable, well-intentioned people working together. The potential for the state Commission on the Status of Women to have a positive impact in Massachusetts is enormous. I would be honored to work as a member on the issues and problems that affect all of us."

~ Elaine F. Guiney

1946 - 2004

This annual report of the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW) is dedicated to former Commissioner Elaine F. Guiney, who succumbed to an all too short battle with cancer on February 20th. Her passion for our mission, vision, guidance and involvement will be forever missed.

Elaine wrote the quote above in her request for appointment to the MCSW by the Massachusetts Women's Legislative Caucus. Elaine wanted to be appointed to enhance economic opportunities for women. She knew that in order to guarantee economic self-sufficiency for women, all opportunities needed to be available to them, including non-traditional jobs and self-employment. She knew that dealing with economic issues was key to improving the lives of women living within Massachusetts.

Elaine was the Massachusetts District Director for the U.S. Small Business Administration, where she sought to further economic independence for women. She was passionate about giving or finding ways for entrepreneurial women to get access to capital. She had previously served as the organization's regional advocate for five years. There she saw first hand the special problems faced by women trying to gain access to capital to fulfill their dreams of business ownership. She was committed to providing them the business counseling and financial assistance they needed to achieve their visions.

Elaine had also served as the Commissioner of Elder Affairs and director for the Office of Housing for the city of Boston.

While she never sought public office herself, Elaine was a force within the state's Democratic party, helping both Kevin H. White and Thomas M. Menino win their first bids for the mayor's office in Boston and she directed the state's 1992 Clinton-Gore campaign.

Elaine brought all these skills, interests and passions to the Commission as well as her interest in domestic violence, child-care and educational opportunities for women. She served as chair of the Commission's Child-care Task Force and worked closely in this capacity with Senator John Kerry's office to produce "The Business of Child-care Report". She also led the Commission's endorsement and involvement with the passage of legislation that would create Early Education for All. She served on the Commission for four years, most recently as its vice chairman. She had hoped to be the Commission's next chair, but became ill shortly before the annual election.

With Elaine's passing, the Commission is forever robbed of her leadership and guidance. And while we will continue to move forward and flourish, it was important to all of us that we find a way to appropriately honor her contributions, and to keep her indomitable spirit alive. To ensure that we keep Elaine in our hearts, and her light still shining, the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women is proud to join the Guiney family in support of the ***Elaine F. Guiney Memorial Foundation***, which was created to ensure that Elaine's passion and commitment to mentoring continues.

Elaine believed that the progress that women have made must be preserved and more opportunities be made available to younger women to ensure that their path be somewhat easier - and the choices greater - for each subsequent generation. Elaine's Memorial Foundation will continue the mentoring that Elaine did by providing a series of summer internships to young women. The internships will be awarded on a competitive basis and will be in a variety of workplace situations in the general areas of government, politics and business. The intent of the experiences will be to provide the interns with guidance and direction as they face vital life choices such as choice of career, college and future steps.

Tax deductible contributions to Elaine's Foundation may be sent to: The Elaine Guiney Memorial Foundation, Boston Plan for Excellence, 6 Beacon Street, Suite 615, Boston, MA 02108.

For Elaine, An Excerpt from "One Small Star" by Eric Bogle

*When we need to feel you near us
We stand in this quiet place
With the silver light of countless stars
Falling on our face
Though they all shine so brightly
Somehow it comforts me to know
That some who burn the brightest
Died not so long ago.*

*Your light still shines,
As one small star to guide us
And to help us hold back the dark -
Your light's still shining in our hearts.*

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Front Cover Photo:

MCSW Commissioners, back row, left to right are Catherine Pakaluk, Frances Hogan, Dr. Helen Jackson, Susana Segat, Mary Reardon Johnson, and Martha Chadwick.

MCSW Commissioners, front row, left to right are Donna Finneran, Kathy Casavant, Angela Menino, Dr. Roseanna Means, Kateri Walsh, Lianne Cook and Marianne Fleckner.

MISSION

The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women exists to advance women toward full equality in all areas of life and to promote rights and opportunities for all women. The Commission provides a permanent, effective voice for women across Massachusetts.

The Commission is empowered to:

- ◆ Study, review and report on the status of women in the Commonwealth
- ◆ Advise executive and legislative bodies on the effect of proposed legislation on women
- ◆ Inform leaders of business, education, health care, state and local governments, and the communications media of issues pertaining to women
- ◆ Provide referrals and serve as a resource of information on issues pertaining to women
- ◆ Identify and recommend qualified women for positions at all levels of government
- ◆ Promote and facilitate collaboration among local Women's Commissions and among women's organizations in the state
- ◆ Serve as a liaison between government and private interest groups concerned with issues affecting women.

COMMISSIONERS
(As of June 30, 2004)

Marianne Fleckner, Chair
Susana Segat, Vice-Chair
M. Clare Higgins, Treasurer
Donna Finneran, Secretary
Nilka Alvarez-Rodriguez
Kathleen Casavant
Martha Chadwick
Lianne Cook
Catherine Greene
Frances Hogan
Dr. Helen Jackson
Dianne Luby
Maria Marasco
Dr. Roseanna Means
Angela Menino
Catherine Pakaluk
Carol Pimentel
Mary Reardon Johnson
Kateri Walsh

STAFF

Linda Brantley, Executive Director
Paula Daddona, Program Manager / Web Master
Darlene Kelter, Administrative Assistant

INTERNS

The Commission thanks the following interns and volunteers for their invaluable contributions this fiscal year:

Lynne Arsenault, Northern Essex Community College
Voncia Barno, University of Pennsylvania, United Leaders Fellow
Patience Fomunyan, UMASS Boston CWPPP
Jennifer Morse, Simmons College
Tina Pak, Emerson College
Alexandra Pittman, Harvard University
Robin Rich, Macalester College
Caitlin Rogalski, Simmons College
Katie Unger, Boston College
Sarah Unsworth, Simmons College
Alison Hooper, Volunteer
Lori Lannan, Esq., Volunteer

MEET OUR COMMISSIONERS

Appointing Authority designated as follows: G – Governor, S – Senate President, H – Speaker of the House of Representatives and C – Caucus of Women Legislators.

Nilka Alvarez-Rodriguez of Lawrence is a professional policy analyst and experienced organizer around issues affecting poor and working class women. She has 22 years of experience in the delivery and design of human services and has been the recipient of a multitude of awards for her community organizing designs. She has served as an advisor to many legislators in Massachusetts and New York. She worked with former New York Governor Mario Cuomo through his Executive Office of the Women's Division. She also worked at local, national, and international levels through the National Congress of Neighborhood Women, Mujer, National Latina Women Caucus, Women's Agenda and United Nations. She is the former Client Services Manager at the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center and is currently serving her second term as a Lawrence City Councilor. Nilka's life work revolves around facilitating the participation of poor and working class communities in the public and private policy-making process. (C)

Kathleen Casavant of Chelsea is the Treasurer of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, representing over 400,000 union members and their families in Massachusetts. She is the first woman ever elected to serve in that position. Her career in the labor movement has spanned over twenty-five years and has included union organizing, contract negotiations, political and legislative work. Among the many boards on which she serves are the Boston Living Wage Council, the Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth, the Labor Advisory Board of Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and the Visiting Board of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union. Kathy has worked diligently over her career to develop relationships with community, religious and women's organizations in order to build a stronger labor movement. She has worked within the labor movement to ensure that women's voices are heard and has pushed strongly for more women to get involved by sharing her own experiences and encouraging union women to participate in leadership training. (S)

Martha (Martie) Chadwick of Boston recently retired from a career in public service, which included working for three Republican administrations. She most recently worked at the Department of Public Health, where she coordinated HIPPA training for its 4,000 employees. She served as Special Assistant to the Chief Secretary, Office of Governor Jane Swift, and as Special Assistant to Susan Roosevelt Weld. She worked on economic projects at the Department of Economic Affairs under the Cellucci Administration. Martie is an advisor to the Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus, and served as chair for its Abigail Adams fundraiser in 2002. She is a founding member of Massachusetts Action for Women, and is a member of the Junior League of Boston. She would like to see the public more educated about women's economic issues, including jobs, day care and food stamps, as well as women's health. (G)

Lianne Cook of Salem is the executive director of Health Quarters, a regional non-profit women's health care organization. She has twenty-five years of experience working in the health care field, as a nurse, administrator and CEO. She volunteers extensively with the Massachusetts Family Planning Association, Family Planning Councils of America, and the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association. She has presented testimonials to legislative committees on budget items, provider reimbursement structures, and pending bills such as the current emergency contraceptive bill. She strives to expand women's access to health care, especially for low income and uninsured women and is an advocate for sexuality education and reproductive health. (C)

Donna Finneran of Mattapan is the co-owner of "Just Perfect!" a small gift basket business. She is active in the Dorchester YMCA and serves on the Board of Visitors of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union. She is also on the Democratic State Committee and is involved in many local and neighborhood civic organizations. Donna is interested in adult education, and specifically in encouraging women to return to school to receive degrees and helping them to do so. She is also concerned with, and works towards, improving the availability of shelters for women and children. (H)

Marianne Fleckner of Westford, chair of the MCSW, is the Associate Commissioner of Management and Operations at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). Before this, Marianne was employed by the Massachusetts Human Resources Division and managed a staff that defined the Commonwealth's Business Requirements for a new automated Human Resources/Compensation Management system. She has also worked as the Deputy Chief Secretary for Governors Weld and Cellucci. Marianne is active in the Westford Republican Town Committee, Middlesex Republican Women, the National Notary Association and the League of Women Voters. She volunteers with Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library and with the Westford School System. The women's issues she is most involved with are sexual harassment in the workplace, domestic violence and equal pay for equal work. (G)

Catherine Greene, Esq. of Brighton is the Executive Director of the Suffolk County Family Justice Center. She previously served as the Interim Executive Director at Jane Doe, Inc. and as Assistant Chief of the Public Protection Bureau at the Office of the Attorney General. She is a Commissioner on the Governor's Commission on Sexual and Domestic Violence (GCSDV) and is Co-Chair of the GCSDV's Steering Committee. Catherine is also a board member of the National Alliance Against Sexual Assault. She is most involved with issues surrounding domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. She also works towards helping promote women in elected office, and economic empowerment. (G)

M. Clare Higgins, Mayor of the City of Northampton. Previously, she served on the Northampton City Council as a City Councilor At Large for three terms, the last term as president of the Council. In addition, Clare is the Chair of the Northampton State Hospital Citizen's Advisory Committee, served as a Commissioner of the Northampton Housing Authority, and was a founding board member of the Northampton Area Land Trust. Clare has spent her professional life working with children and families. She was a child-care teacher, a child-care center director and a program director at the Hampshire Community Action Commission. She also developed and directed a comprehensive program for adolescent parents and their children. For two years, Clare was the Western Massachusetts Staff representative for District 65 UAW, Day Care and Human Services Local. (C)

Frances Hogan of Everett is a partner with the law firm of Lyne, Woodworth & Evarts LLP in Boston where her practice is in the area of complex commercial and real estate-related transactions. She focuses particularly on the representation of institutions, non-profits and governmental entities in connection with the development, construction and financing of affordable housing and community economic development. She is a member of the Massachusetts Conveyancers Association and the Abstract Club. She also serves, or has served, on the boards of numerous charitable and civic organizations among which are the Warren Five Cents Savings Bank, Regis College Alumnae Association (as President), Boston College Law School Alumni Council, Catholic Lawyers Guild, St. Elizabeth's Hospital Foundation, Everett Historical Society (as President), Archdiocesan Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, and the Planning Office for Urban Affairs. Frances' lifelong interest in bringing values-based civil discourse into the public policy arena has been nurtured through

service on the Board of the Massachusetts Catholic Conference and the National Advisory Council to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. (H)

Dr. Helen Jackson of W. Roxbury, is an obstetrician and gynecologist in private practice. (H)

Dianne Luby of Boston has been the President and CEO of Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts (PPLM) since December 1999. PPLM is the largest freestanding reproductive health care provider in the Commonwealth. Dianne brings a broad mix of experience in private and public sectors in both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. She came to PPLM from the State of New Hampshire where she served as the state's Director of Public Health, which included responsibility for the Medicaid Administration Bureau. Prior to that, she spent 15 years in the managed care industry working for HMO's and insurers in California, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee in various positions including VP Medical Management and VP Operations. Early in her career, Dianne founded and served as the first Executive Director of Manet Community Health Center, a federally funded community health center in Quincy, Massachusetts. Her initial training was as an occupational therapist specializing in hand injuries. (S)

Maria Marasco of Andover is a businesswoman, lawyer and currently the Director of Marketing and Development for Medical Diagnostic Healthcare, a non-profit organization that opened the first freestanding digital mammography center in Massachusetts. Maria is dedicated to her organization's mission, raising awareness for breast screening and reaching the thousands of women who have not yet been screened for breast cancer. She has served three governors of both parties to manage a number of important state agencies, serving as the Chairman of the Department of Employment and Training's Board of Review and Executive Director of the Appellate Tax Board. Maria has also advised small businesses with marketing and legal advice. She believes in the entrepreneurial efforts of women in both the private and public sector and is serving on the Commission as an advocate for quality of life and fairness issues. (G)

Dr. Roseanna Means of Wellesley is the founder, president and executive/medical director of Women of Means, Inc., a non-profit organization that provides free medical care for homeless women in shelters. She has practiced Internal Medicine in the Boston area since 1984, and maintains a private practice in Wellesley. Dr. Means is involved with Brigham and Women's Hospital, Massachusetts Medical Society, Society of General Internal Medicine and Health Care for All. She is also an Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. She has a strong interest in underserved populations, having done relief work in Appalachia, Southeast Asia and Latin America. She devotes much of her time to issues around homelessness and women's health, and helping homeless and low-income women get access to health care. (C)

Angela Menino of Readville has more than thirty years experience in the field of accounting with John Hancock Financial Services. She is a Founding Member of the Boston Women's Commission, the Boston Community Schools (now called Boston Community Centers), and the MCSW. Angela has been active with a number of boards in Boston. She was recently appointed to the Advisory Board for the Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus and serves on the board of Dress for Success. She serves on committees supporting a number of programs that benefit women and families, including, the Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence, the Jane Doe Foundation, the Patriots' Trail Girl Scouts, the Big Sister Association of Greater Boston, and the Boston Women's Memorial. (C)

Catherine Pakaluk of Worcester is a doctoral candidate in the economics department at Harvard University, with a concentration on the economics of marriage and family, and school

finance reform. She has published numerous articles on economics and is currently writing two books, one about lessons of motherhood, and the other on the connection of Christianity, motherhood and women's bodies. Catherine is a founding board member of the Visitation House in Worcester. Visitation House is a home for expectant and single mothers in need of material, emotional or spiritual assistance. (H)

Carol Pimentel of New Bedford is the Director of Internal Audit and Administrative Services at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth (UMD). Carol serves as an EEO Liaison and is on several committees at UMD. Before working at UMD, Carol was employed by the City of New Bedford as the City Auditor and later became the Director at the Mayor's Office of Community Development. Carol is a Commissioner for Schooner Ernestina, and is on the Board of Governors of the New Bedford Oceanarium. She is also a member of the NAACP, YWCA, YMCA and is active in the New Bedford area community. She is dedicated to advancing the cause of equality and also wrote a publication on her experience in pursuing further education to aid other women in their return to school. (C)

Mary Reardon Johnson of East Longmeadow is the Executive Director of the YWCA of Western Massachusetts, whose mission is "the empowerment of women and the elimination of racism." Mary's career has focused on meeting the critical needs of women and girls, especially in the area of domestic violence and teen pregnancy. She has worked at the YWCA to create and build up services for battered women and victims of sexual assault, and services for pregnant and parenting teens. She is on the Board of Directors of the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Human Service Forum, Private Industry Council/ Regional Employment Board (PIC/REB), and the National Association of YWCA Executives. She is a member of numerous boards and committees, including the Rotary Club, the Springfield Women's Club, YWCA National Nominating Committee and Springfield's Welfare Advisory Committee. (G)

Susana Segat of Cambridge is the Founding President of SEIU Local 888, a new local that represents education workers from Headstart to higher education, as well as municipal, county and state workers. Susana has also served as Political Director of the Massachusetts SEIU State Council, an umbrella organization for all SEIU locals in the state. She is active in her community and on state boards. A past chair of the Cambridge Democratic City Committee, Susana was elected to the Cambridge School Committee for three successive terms. In 2002, she was appointed by then-Governor Jane Swift as a labor representative to the board of Massport, the first female to be appointed to a labor seat. After emigrating to the United States from Argentina at the age of eight, Susana got her start in the labor movement organizing office workers at Stanford University. (S)

Kateri Walsh is a Springfield City Councilor and works for a Springfield insurance agent specializing in the women's market and long-term care. As City Councilor, she initiated a citywide network, "Women United Against Violence" (W.U.A.V.) to raise the awareness of domestic violence as a major community concern. She is also currently the Chair of the Springfield Women's Commission, and a member of Springfield's Ward 6 Democratic Committee. Kateri is a member of the Advisory Board of Bay Path College, and a former trustee of Our Lady of the Elms College. She has been active in community organizations, and most recently is a member of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade Committee. She is the host of a weekly talk show for WHYN-AM 560, which focuses on community affairs. (S)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fiscal Year 2004 was one of great expansion and accomplishment for the MCSW. Key highlights of the year include:

◆ ***The Eleanor Roosevelt Unsung Heroine Award Luncheon***

The Commission launched its first signature event with the creation of The Eleanor Roosevelt Unsung Heroine Award Luncheon. Held in April, the event honored three women who had, as Mrs. Roosevelt (the chairperson of the first President's Commission on the Status of Women) urged, "Done the thing that they (or others) thought couldn't be done" for the women of Massachusetts.

The Unsung Heroine Awards were presented at a luncheon held at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel and was attended by two hundred people. Keynote speakers included Susan Roosevelt Weld and Boston Globe columnist Eileen McNamara.

Honorees included: the West Roxbury Friends of Rosie's Place, Isabel Melendez of Lawrence and Gloria I. Torres of Springfield.

The West Roxbury Friends of Rosie's Place is a group of over 400 members who prepare and serve meals, host fundraisers, and solicit help from young people for this worthy cause. These guardian angels were honored for their part in the growth and success of Rosie's Place.

Isabel Melendez of Lawrence was recognized for the more than 30 years she has dedicated to being the voice of the Hispanic community in Lawrence. She is the Director of the Spanish Program of the Greater Lawrence Community Action Council. She provides translation services and is a liaison between the City of Lawrence, social service agencies and private organizations to make sure that immigration needs in Lawrence are met.

Gloria I. Torres of Springfield was acknowledged for the work she has done to fight domestic violence. Ms. Torres came to America with two young children when a revolution claimed her husband's life. She has dedicated much of her time to serving women, both professionally and personally, because she understands what it is to need help. She is a staff member of the Assistant Chief Probation Department for the Springfield District Court.

Each of these nominees represents the spirit of the Eleanor Roosevelt Unsung Heroine Award.

Proceeds from the luncheon will help to fund the Commission's budget analysis project.

◆ ***Commissioning *The Impact of the Budget on the Women of Massachusetts Study****

This year the MCSW, for the first time, commissioned an analysis of how state budget cuts enacted during the fiscal crisis have impacted the lives of women and families in the Commonwealth. The Commission contracted with the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center (MBPC) to conduct an analysis of the ***The Impact of the Budget on the Women of Massachusetts***.

The MBPC will analyze budget data and other evidence to examine the effects of changes in access to services such as education and higher education, job training, child-care, and healthcare on the economic security and life opportunities of Massachusetts' women and

families. It will also examine the policy choices that led to service cuts. Results of the study are anticipated in the fall of 2004.

◆ **Collaborations and partnerships that addressed key women's issues and lay the groundwork for meaningful change**

The Commission used the adage, "Alone we do good things, together we achieve great things," to the fullest and agreed to, and sought out, partnerships that drew together collective input and energy to work effectively on meaningful issues. Key partners included its appointing authorities, particularly the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators, statewide organizations devoted to women and their issues, colleges and universities with women's programs and many more. Further examples of these partnerships are outlined later in this report.

◆ **Legislative advocacy to shape the state's public policy agenda for women**

The Commission expanded its activity in the legislative arena, actively participating in the legislative process by testifying on behalf of legislation it had endorsed as well as other key pieces of legislation that would impact the women of the Commonwealth. It participated in several groups that met regularly to discuss and craft legislative agendas and strategies in specific areas. The Commission laid the groundwork to have even more of a voice in this area by commissioning a budget analysis to determine how state budget cuts enacted during the fiscal crisis have impacted the lives of women and families in the Commonwealth. The results of this analysis will allow the Commission to give lawmakers and public policymakers the tools and information they need to create positive change.

◆ **Developing alternative sources of funding to augment the Commission's inadequate operational budget**

The Commission implemented language in its enabling legislation that allowed it to accept donations and funding from outside sources to offset operating expenses and fund special projects. A trust fund was established for the MCSW in order to create an ongoing repository for donated funds that remain within the Commission's control. The Commission is extremely grateful to the following donors who contributed this year and in large part are responsible for the funding of the budget analysis:

- BlueCross BlueShield of Massachusetts
- Bingham McCutchen
- Pamela Everhart Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
- The Teresa & H. John Heinz, III Charitable Fund
- AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations)
- AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees)
- MOSES (Massachusetts Organization of State Engineers and Scientists)
- MNA (Massachusetts Nurses Association)
- OPEIU (The Office & Professional Employees International Union)
- SEIU (Service Employees International Union) and
- MCSW Commissioner Martie Chadwick

In addition, the Commission was fully appointed and staffed to the level allowed by its budget. The MCSW welcomed new faces and bid adieu to others, grateful to each for their involvement

and support of the Commission.

Retiring from the Commission were Charter Commissioners:

- *Jo Anne Thompson*, appointed by former Governor William Weld, and
- *Barbara Gomes-Beach*, appointed by the Massachusetts Women's Legislative Caucus

The Commission welcomed:

- *Lianne Cook* and *Carol Pimentel*, appointed by the Massachusetts Women's Legislative Caucus,
- *Catherine Greene, esq.*, and *Maria Marasco*, appointed by Governor Mitt Romney, and
- *Catherine Pakaluk*, appointed by Speaker of the House Thomas Finneran.

In the last month of the fiscal year the Commission undertook a strategic planning session that, along with the results of the Budget Analysis, will well position the commission for its work in the coming fiscal year.

The Commission welcomes you to join with us during these very exciting times. Outside participation and support is always greatly appreciated.

COMMISSION OVERVIEW

The Commission is an independent state agency that is comprised of nineteen appointed Commissioners. The Governor appoints five Commissioners; the Senate President appoints four Commissioners; the Speaker of the House of Representatives appoints four Commissioners; and the Caucus of Women Legislators appoints six Commissioners.

Commissioners are selected from throughout the Commonwealth and are a diverse group of committed women. Commissioners volunteer their time to work with the Commission's staff on programs, legislation, and constituent services. This year, as always, the Commission's work was guided by the Commission's mandate "to provide an effective voice for women in the Commonwealth."

The Commission meets regularly on the fourth Wednesday of each month, except in July and August. Special guests and speakers are often invited to the monthly full Commission meetings to educate Commissioners and help broaden their perspectives.

COMMISSION OFFICERS AND SUBCOMMITTEES

The Commission is governed by bylaws that guide its operation and outline the election of officers and the committee structure.

Officers for fiscal year 2004 included:

Marianne Fleckner, Chair
Susana Segat, Vice-Chair
M. Clare Higgins, Treasurer
Donna Finneran, Secretary

Since the full Commission meets once a month, the majority of the Commission's work is done in subcommittees. Every Commissioner sits on at least one subcommittee. The subcommittees usually meet once a month. The subcommittees then report back to the full Commission for approval and support. The FY'04 subcommittees were as follows:

1. Executive Subcommittee: Commissioner Fleckner, Chair

The Executive Subcommittee is composed of the four officers, the chairs of the other subcommittees, and the past chair of the full Commission. It meets once a month to review Commission activities and plan for the full Commission meeting.

2. Legislative Subcommittee: Commissioner Casavant, Chair

The Legislative Subcommittee makes recommendations to guide the Commission's legislative and public policy activity. It considers proposed legislation for endorsement by the full Commission, carefully examining both sides of a bill. It is involved with the coordination of testimony presented at public hearings and other venues, and legislative advocacy activities.

3. *Budget & Personnel Subcommittee: Commissioner Finneran, Chair*

The Budget and Personnel Subcommittee provides oversight of the Commission's budget and financial activity. It also oversees the hiring and performance reviews of the Commission's Executive Director.

4. *Program & Planning Subcommittee: Commissioner Chadwick, Chair*

The Program & Planning Subcommittee helps to coordinate the planning and implementation of the Commission's special events and activities. This committee also takes the lead with Commission fundraising activity and developing alternative sources of funding to augment the Commission's budget.

COMMISSION BUDGET

Budget History and FY 2004 Expenditures:

Commission on the Status of Women	BUDGET FY'2001	BUDGET FY'2002	BUDGET FY'2003	BUDGET FY'2004 Actuals
Total Income from State Appropriation	\$195,000 (Reduced to \$165,000)	\$165,000 (Reduced to \$145,000)	\$145,000	\$145,000
Salaries	\$131,000	\$131,000	\$98,046	*\$126,353
Operating Expenses	\$ 64,000	\$ 15,000	\$46,954	\$18,347

The Commission complies with state-mandated policies and maintains a balanced budget. Commission staff is responsible for all personnel and fiscal administration but is grateful for the ongoing assistance it receives from the Office of the State Comptroller, the Department of Employment and Training and many other state departments and agencies.

*The MCSW continues to be unable to afford a full-time Administrative Assistant although there is ample work and need for a full-time support person. Currently, 2.6 people are serving the over 3.3 million women of the Commonwealth. **The Commission will seek the restoration of its original budget appropriation in the coming fiscal year as the economy rebounds and more fiscal resources become available.**

HOW THE COMMISSION FULFILLS ITS MISSION

1. Study, review and report on the status of women in the Commonwealth

In FY 2004 the MCSW commissioned the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center (MBPC) to conduct an analysis of the ***The Impact of the Budget on the Women of Massachusetts***. This report will provide an analysis of how state budget cuts enacted during the fiscal crisis have impacted the lives of women and families in the Commonwealth. The MBPC will analyze budget data and other evidence to examine the effects of changes in access to services such as education and higher education, job training, child-care, and healthcare on the economic security and life opportunities of Massachusetts' women and families. It will also examine the policy choices that led to service cuts.

The report, the first ever commissioned by the MCSW, will be prepared to be both interesting and accessible to members of the general public. It will not be a comprehensive look at everything government does that helps women, but rather will focus on selected areas where budget choices have had particularly significant affects on the lives of women families. In preparing the report, the MBPC will examine a broad array of services that affect women. This will include programs that clearly are targeted at women (such as the Healthy Start prenatal health program), areas where women are disproportionately served, but for less obvious reasons (such as state and community colleges where 60% of the students are women), and even programs where women and girls are not disproportionately served, but that are nonetheless important to women (like K-12 public education). MBPC will examine the degree to which these programs affect the lives of women, looking both at data about who receives the services and also at broader demographic data. MBPC will examine how these programs help women. They will ask questions such as, how much do women's wages rise when they receive a community college degree? How much more economically productive can women be when they have subsidized child-care? Do domestic violence programs reduce domestic violence? Do healthy start and home visiting programs help young mothers and their children? There will be an effort to not simply talk about recent cuts, but also to examine what these programs have accomplished. MBPC will then examine the impact that the fiscal crisis has had on these programs, examining both changes in funding and the affects of those changes.

In keeping with the goal of providing a report that is user-friendly and accessible to the general public, the report will present the most interesting and relevant data and analysis. The Commission will receive the results of this analysis this fall and looks forward to sharing the information with the women of Massachusetts, its appointing authorities and other public policymakers.

2. Assess the status of Massachusetts' women through meeting directly with women around the Commonwealth to hear their concerns, identify gaps in services and potential solutions

Holding public hearings to listen to the voices and concerns of women and organizations working and advocating for women in Massachusetts is an ongoing activity of the Commission. The Commission uses public hearing testimony and hearing survey results to shape its work. The Commission has held 14 public hearings to date, two this year, in

Lowell and Danvers. The hearings are open to anyone wishing to participate and many individuals and organizations are invited to attend. In addition to inviting the Commission's female constituents, the Commission always invites legislators, local government officials, local organizations serving women, and individuals/community leaders from the communities in which the hearings are held. A report summarizing the testimony from each hearing, as well as results of a survey conducted at each hearing, are distributed to all hearing participants, the Commission's appointing authorities, as well as legislators, regional and local officials and various women's organizations. These reports are also posted on the Commission's Web site and are easily downloadable.

The Commissioners use the testimony offered at these hearings to guide them as they select priority issues on which to concentrate their efforts. Based on this feedback, violence against women and child-care were selected as top priorities for the Commission's work this fiscal year.

3. *Advocate for legislation and public policy changes that will positively impact the status of women*

◆ *The Commission has endorsed and/or worked to pass seven pieces of legislation:*

- ◆ An Act Establishing a Bill of Rights for Victims of Sexual Assault
- ◆ An Act Providing Equitable Coverage of Services Under Health Plans
- ◆ An Act to Ensure Eligibility for Unemployment Insurance for Victims of Domestic Violence
- ◆ An Act to Prohibit Discrimination in Insurance Policies
- ◆ An Act to Establish a Self-Sufficiency Standard in Massachusetts
- ◆ An Act Creating Early Education for All
- ◆ An Act Creating a Commission on the Status of Women in the Berkshires

The Commission actively participated in this year's legislative session by offering testimony in support of its priorities and other legislation impacting women.

◆ *MA & New England Regional Paid Family Leave Coalitions*

The Commission is active with both the Massachusetts and New England Coalitions working to create and enact Paid Family Leave legislation.

◆ *Caucus of Women Legislators Task Force on Women in Poverty*

The Commission is part of this committee, chaired by State Representative Anne Paulsen, which strives to lessen the burden on this group.

◆ *Caucus of Women Legislators Task Force on Women in the Criminal Justice System*

The Commission works with this committee, chaired by State Representative Kay Khan, which examines the circumstances of these women.

4. *Serve as a resource and referral network for women of the Commonwealth*

To ensure that women in the state have the tools and data they need when they need it, the Commission maintains an extensive collection of information and services pertaining to women and families. This includes data on all agencies and organizations statewide that serve women. Although the Commission does not provide direct services, constituents regularly contact the office and the staff is able to utilize the clearinghouse to offer resources and referrals to assist that person's particular need. The organizations to which constituents are frequently referred include: various government agencies, advocacy groups, and legal services groups. Information sought this fiscal year included: legal assistance, financial assistance domestic violence, sexual harassment in the workplace, health insurance, child-care & support, employment rights, unemployment, child custody and divorce, equal pay, and research questions.

5. *Promote and facilitate collaboration among among women's organizations in the state, including local Women's Commissions*

- ◆ The Commission organized a celebration of *Women's Equality Day*, the anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment that gave American women the right to vote. This day is celebrated annually on August 26. It welcomed participation from other women's organizations that work to ensure women's participation in the political process.
- ◆ The Commission has collaborated and formed alliances with a wide variety of organizations on projects of mutual interest that impact the status of women. Collaborators include Early Education for All (EEA), Jane Doe, Inc., Massachusetts Family Economic Self-Sufficiency (MassFESS), the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy (CWPPP), Amnesty International and the League of Women Voters. It was proud to be a co-sponsor of the Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus' (MWPC) Campaign Skills Training workshop, the State Treasurer's Money Conference for Women and Human Rights Day.
- ◆ For National Women's History Month in March, the Commission joined forces with many groups, including the Simmons Institute for Leadership and Change, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Association of Haitian Women in Boston, Boston Women's Commission, Irish Immigration Center, Somali Women and Children's Association, to host the annual International Women's Day celebration on March 8 at Simmons College.
- ◆ Commission staff and Commissioners regularly attended meetings and events of other women's groups throughout the year.
- ◆ The Commission works closely with the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators on both issues and legislation of concern to women across the Commonwealth.
- ◆ The MCSW is a resource for both established and emerging local women's commissions and continues to promote the growth of local Women's Commissions throughout the Commonwealth. This year the Commission worked closely with the Legislature to pass legislation that would create a Berkshire County Commission on Women. It is hoped that this legislation will pass before the end of this year's

legislative session.

- ◆ The Commission is a member of the New England Women's Commissions.

6. *Inform leaders of business, education, health care, state and local governments and the communications media of issues pertaining to women*

- ◆ The MCSW works diligently to educate the public about the Commission and raise awareness about the status of Massachusetts's women and the issues that matter most to them. Success was achieved through:
 - Regular correspondence and outreach to constituents and legislators
 - Publication of a Commission newsletter
 - Publication of a Commission brochure
 - Maintenance of the Commission Web site
- ◆ The Commission serves as a spokesperson on the status of women in Massachusetts and women's issues with the media and manages a comprehensive media and public relations outreach plan.
- ◆ The Commission's Web site (www.mass.gov/women) is a user-friendly tool that constituents can use to learn about the Commission and access online resource referrals. Such features of the Web site include: a list of domestic violence and sexual assault hotline numbers on the local, state, and national level; a list of various Massachusetts' hotline numbers; information on topics such as child-care, economic issues, education, elder advocacy, health and insurance advocacy, housing advocacy, and legal assistance. The Commission's Web site also contains information about the Commission, such as the Commission's mission statement and goals, list of current commissioners, calendar of upcoming Commission meetings and events. Public hearing reports, hearing survey results and photos from each hearing are also posted. Other Commission publications are also available for PDF download on the Web site, such as the Commission's brochure and newsletter.
- ◆ Commissioners and staff were sought after speakers at various events and activities statewide.

7. *Identify and recommend qualified women for positions at all levels of government, including boards and commissions*

- ◆ In 2003, the MCSW created and published a "*How to Get Appointed to State Boards and Commissions*" handbook to encourage women of the Commonwealth to become involved in the political process. This guide has proved to be immensely popular and the Commission is currently updating the handbook for its third printing. The Commission is proud to be able to offer the women of Massachusetts information for which they are so obviously hungry.
- ◆ Getting more women involved at all levels of the political process is a key goal of the Commission. To this end the MCSW was pleased to join with other New England Women's Commissions and women's organizations to co-sponsor the *New England*

Women's Political Summit, held on October 26 & 27, 2003 at the JFK Library in Boston. Over 400 women from throughout New England attended the event, which was spearheaded by The Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy at UMASS Boston. The Summit brought together women from every walk of political life in order to: examine the current status of women in politics in each of the New England states; share strategies to strengthen women's impact on politics; develop targets for increased representation and influence; and generate concrete action plans for increasing women's representation at the municipal, state and national levels in each of the six states.

- ◆ As a follow-up to the Summit, the MCSW initiated "*Women & Politics 2004 – What Will You Do*" in March to again bring women together to evaluate their role in the political process and to spur them forward in light of the fall election. Over 100 women attended this interactive event that was teleconferenced from three different locations across the Commonwealth.
- ◆ In partnership with the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators, the Commission began a series of informal dinner meetings for key women leaders named "*Bringing Women to the Table.*" These sessions have the goal of bringing women together from diverse professions and organizations to define common issues and explore expanded and improved ways of collaboration to effect true change.

8. *Work with other local, state and federal government agencies on issues and/or projects that affect women*

- ◆ Due to its commitment to, and work on, domestic violence prevention, the Commission was fortunate to receive two appointments to the Governor's Commission on Sexual and Domestic Violence.
- ◆ The Commission annually works with the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, NY to educate, promote and gain recognition for Massachusetts' women being inducted into this prestigious organization.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

Internship or Volunteer Program

The MCSW is a small organization with a huge charge! Therefore we are always seeking interns and volunteers to assist us in achieving our goals and meeting the needs of Massachusetts' women. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, all intern positions are unpaid.

Opportunities in the following areas are available for either interns or volunteers: Legislative/Research; Advocacy; Fundraising; Communications; Database Development and Management; Resource and Referral Clearinghouse; or General duties. For consideration, please indicate which intern/volunteer position you are interested in and forward a letter of interest and resume to the Commission office.

Serve as a Commissioner

To be considered for appointment by any of the Commission's appointing authorities, please submit a completed application form annually between August 15 and September 30. Mail the form to the Commission, which will forward it to the appropriate appointing authority. Please remember that information that you provide is public and cannot be kept private or confidential. If you are appointed, your term of office will be determined based on the vacant position you are filling. The maximum term is three years.

Become a Donor

Contributions to support MCSW operations and special projects are always welcome. Checks should be made payable to the "MCSW" and sent to the Commission office. For more information, please contact the Commission office at (617) 626-6520.